



# ParentInfo

News for a child's most important educator

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Produced by the Kentucky Department of Education

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## Changes to website affect 'ParentInfo'

Recently, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) redesigned its website. While most of the information successfully migrated through the process, there has been a slight delay with the *ParentInfo* information.

One of the *ParentInfo* pages that currently doesn't exist is the page with the link to sign up for *ParentInfo*.

Until this page is updated on the KDE website, please continue to share *ParentInfo* with other parents, but ask them to e-mail [Susan Riddell](mailto:susan.riddell@education.ky.gov) to sign up for the newsletter.

## Featured video: A message to parents about test scores

To assist parents and other interested Kentuckians in understanding the changes in the state's new testing system, KDE offers several resources to help prepare for the 2011-12 school year test scores release tomorrow, Nov. 2.

Here, KDE shares a video message from Education Commissioner Terry Holliday for parents to assist them in understanding the changes in Kentucky's testing system since it moves the state from a focus on just proficiency to one of college and career readiness. To view this video, [click here](#).

Parents also are encouraged to visit KDE's [Unbridled Learning](#) webpage for additional resources that offer more detailed information.

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## Share ParentInfo with others

To sign up for *ParentInfo*, e-mail [susan.riddell@education.ky.gov](mailto:susan.riddell@education.ky.gov)  
or call (502) 564-2000, ext. 4621

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## Test and grade information

### K-PREP Assessments

- Reading and mathematics (grades 3-8)
- Science (grades 4 and 7)
- Social studies (grades 5 and 8)
- Writing, Editing/ Mechanics (grade 4)
- Writing, On-Demand (grades 5, 8, 10 and 11)
- Writing, Editing/ Mechanics and On-Demand (grade 6)

### End-of-Course Exams

These are taken when courses are completed for grades 9-12 in English II, Algebra II, Biology and U.S. History

### ACT Family

- EXPLORE (grade 8)
- PLAN (grade 10)
- ACT (grade 11)

## A Parent's Guide to Testing in Kentucky

The Kentucky Department of Education has developed two parent-friendly brochures, one outlining Kentucky's state assessments, when students will take them, other tests children may take and how the results for these tests will be used. The second brochure deals with school accountability, how it is based and determined, how parents will know how their child is doing on state assessments and much more.

To view the brochures, click [here](#).

*ParentInfo* has been highlighting a part of one of the brochures each issue until they all have been covered. Here are answers to more questions about testing.

### ***Is there any testing before 3rd grade?***

Yes. Each school that enrolls primary students (those in grades kindergarten through 3) must use diagnostic assessments that measure readiness in reading and mathematics. The schools may use commercial products, use district-developed products and procedures or develop their own diagnostic procedures, but they must be developmentally appropriate. The results are used to inform teachers and parents/guardians of each student's skill level.

### ***What happened to tests in arts and humanities and practical living/career studies and the writing portfolio?***

Instead of assessing student performance as previously done, schools conduct annual Program Reviews in these areas. Other Program Reviews will be added for K-3 programs and world languages. These reviews, which are done by school personnel, are designed to show whether schools are:

- improving the quality of teaching and learning for all students in all programs
- ensuring all students have equal access to the skills that will assist them in being productive citizens
- allowing students to demonstrate understanding beyond a paper-and-pencil test
- ensuring a school-wide integration of the program skills across all content areas

## Common Core State Standards: More information for parents

As schools across the country move toward implementing the Common Core State Standards, a number of national organizations, including the Council of the Great City Schools and the National Parent Teacher Association, have been producing written materials and creating video and audio segments—in multiple languages—designed to explain the standards to parents, in clear, jargon-free terms.

A webinar being held Nov. 7 from 2 p.m. until 3 will describe common challenges that districts face in discussing the common core with parents. It also will explain how school systems can address parents' fears and misgivings about the standards.

Guests include Denise Walston, director of mathematics, Council of the Great City Schools, Wash. and Gina Kilday, K-6 mathematics coach, Exeter-West Greenwich Regional school district, R.I.

This webinar will be moderated by Sean Cavanagh, assistant editor for *Education Week*. All *Education Week* webinars are archived and accessible "[on demand](#)" for up to six months after the original live-streaming date.

## Kentucky college planning site has updated look, navigation

Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA), like the Kentucky Department of Education, has redesigned its [website](#).

The website is arranged for visitors to navigate by audience or by topic. The enhanced site provides students, parents and others information they need to successfully navigate career exploration, college preparation and financial aid processes. KHEAA staff spent a year designing, programming and decreasing the number of pages while making content more user-friendly and streamlined.

To learn how to plan and prepare for higher education, go to [www.gotocollege.ky.gov](http://www.gotocollege.ky.gov). For more information about Kentucky scholarships and grants, visit [www.kheaa.com](http://www.kheaa.com).

### Poster and essay contest

The Governor's Office of Minority Empowerment is sponsoring its annual poster and essay contest to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. This year's theme is "moving beyond the dream to brighten the future."

This contest is open to all students in grades K-12 and offers prizes for the top three winners in the elementary, middle and high school categories.

Entries must be received in the Governor's Office of Minority Empowerment no later than close of business on Nov. 16.

For more details, visit [www.ome.ky.gov/focus+areas/culturalawareness/mlkjrcomm/](http://www.ome.ky.gov/focus+areas/culturalawareness/mlkjrcomm/).

The contest rules are linked in the upper right corner of the webpage.

### Kentucky Department of Education

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## Federal grant to improve special needs training

Kentucky and 21 other states will share \$24 million in grant money from the U.S. Department of Education to improve personnel training systems to help children with disabilities.

In the first year of the five-year grant, Kentucky will receive \$1,137,671 from the State Personnel Development Grants Program, authorized by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The program provides funds to assist states in reforming and improving their systems for personnel preparation and professional development in early intervention, education and transition services in order to improve results for children with disabilities. The funding period runs from October 2012 to September 2017.

Under the program, states must partner with at least one higher education institution to implement the terms of the grant. States must also partner with at least one local education agency and either a Parent Training and Information Center or a Community Parent Resource Center. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) will partner with the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville for the purposes of this grant.

The grant will support the state's efforts to improve its training systems for staff to better serve children with disabilities. Kentucky's efforts will support two goals:

- to better prepare all students with disabilities to reach proficiency and graduate from high school ready for college and careers through increased academic (reading and math) achievement and closing existing achievement gaps
- to better prepare students with low incidence disabilities to reach proficiency and graduate from high school ready for college and careers through increased and enhanced academic achievement, communication capacity and transition opportunities

The state will use the grant money to work with regional educational cooperatives and the Education Recovery Leaders (ERL) and Specialists (ERS) to provide ongoing training and coaching for teachers of students with disabilities. The funding will support a co-teaching model through professional development on evidence-based instructional strategies.

The funds also will help specialists support the academic and communication professional development needs of teachers of students with low incidence disabilities, related service personnel and families in their regions, as well as implement a formal transition to higher education model for students with Individual Education Programs who remain in high school until the age of 21. This work will help address the needs of students with low incidence disabilities who participate in the alternate assessment program.

Successful implementation of this project will result in increased academic achievement and readiness for college/career for students with disabilities; increased student communication capacity; decreased achievement gaps between students with and without disabilities; and an enhanced regional professional development delivery system with more capacity to serve school districts and schools in their regions.

The grants are being funded under the Office of Special Education Programs.

For information about the specific grants, visit [www.signetwork.org](http://www.signetwork.org).

The U.S. Department of Education has a new [web page for parents and families](#). Topics include parental involvement in schools as set forth in Section 1118 of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, special education, fatherhood, early learning and bullying. There are also resources for military families, tools for selecting a college and paying for it, and tips for [how parents can help children to succeed in school](#).